

General Biology Writing Lab Reports Procedure

General Instructions:

1. All labs must be written in pencil and be submitted in loose-leaf paper.
2. Always use third person (NO personal pronouns --- me, I, you, we, etc.) when writing all parts of a lab report. (USE HE, SHE, THEY, THEIR, THEM, ETC.
3. Number each page of the lab in the lower right hand corner.
4. On Page 1, write the student name, class period, and teacher name.
5. Behind the lab tab of your notebook there should be "Table of Contents" written at the top and two columns, one for "Page" and the other for "Lab Title".
6. DO NOT WRITE ON THE BACK OF YOUR PAPER!
7. SKIP A LINE BETWEEN EVERY SECTION!
8. TITLE and UNDERLINE each section & then begin writing on the NEXT LINE!

Your lab report should be written using the following format: *(Be sure to left align & underline headings)*

Title *(center on top line; on the right of line 2, put date & lab #)*

The title should indicate clearly & concisely the subject and scope of the report.

Introduction - 20 points *(PARAGRAPH FORM)*

- The introduction should give *background information about the experiment or lab.*
- It should also state the purpose of the investigation or lab goals.
- This section will be two or more paragraphs in length.

Hypothesis - 20 points *(SINGLE SENTENCE)*

- The hypothesis should be a *single statement telling the exact thing you are trying to prove in your experiment.*
- NEVER write this statement using "first person". Write the hypothesis in past tense (third person.)

Materials - 5 points (SINGLE SENTENCE)

- This section should be in list format.
- Be sure to include specific amounts and concentrations of chemicals used.

Methods (Procedure) - 5 points (STEPS; NUMBER)

- This section includes *the step-by-step procedures* used.
- The procedure should be so thorough that someone else could use your listed materials and procedures to conduct the same experiment and get the same results.

Results (Data & Questions) - 20 points

- All data should be collected and organized in a logical order. Results should be illustrated as charts, tables, graphs, &/or diagrams. All graphs should include a title, the independent variable labeled on the horizontal axis, and the dependent variable labeled on the vertical axis.
- *All lab questions and answers should be included also with this section.* (NUMBER & UNDERLINE the questions & then write but DON'T UNDERLINE the answers)
- **SKIP ONE LINE BETWEEN EACH QUESTION**

Error Analysis

Include any important factors that you think may have actually affected your results.

Discussion and Conclusion - 30 points

Discussion is the most important part of your report, because here, you show that you understand the experiment beyond the simple level of completing it!!

- Your conclusion **MUST CONTAIN YOUR SUPPORTING DATA!**
- This is where you give a detailed account of what happened in the experiment.
- Explain all observations and results in your experiment.
- Analyze and interpret why these results were obtained.
- Be sure to tell the significance or meaning of the results.
- Restate the original hypothesis and explain whether the experiment succeeded. If the hypothesis was not correct, you should analyze why the results were not as predicted.
- Explain experimental errors that appear in the results.

QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED & CONCLUSION WRITTEN TO RECEIVE LAB CREDIT!